

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5

1. In a messaging system having functionally connected elements including two messaging platforms, a service switching point (SSP), and an intelligent network element (INE),

10 wherein a first of the two messaging platforms is designated as a particular messaging platform (PMP) of a particular subscriber,

wherein a second of the two messaging platforms serves a different subscriber who is served by the SSP so that calls made on a line number of the different subscriber to a pilot number are routed by the SSP to the second messaging platform,

15 wherein the second messaging platform has been accessed by a call directed to the pilot number from the particular subscriber on the line number of the different subscriber, and as a result, the second messaging platform has been designated as a visited messaging platform (VMP) with respect to the particular subscriber,

20 a method to allow the particular subscriber to access the PMP even though the particular subscriber made the call to the pilot number from the line number of the different subscriber served by the VMP, the method comprising:

A. receiving an indicator with respect to the call at the VMP, the indicator indicating a desire by the particular subscriber to backout of the call;

25 B. in response to receiving the indicator, causing the VMP to provide a backout notice;

C. in response to the backout notice, causing the SSP to obtain instructions from the INE, the instructions instructing the SSP to obtain a number from the particular subscriber;

D. in response to the instructions, causing the SSP to obtain the
5 number from the particular subscriber and to provide the number to the INE;
and

E. in response to receiving the number, causing the INE to determine which messaging platform serves the number as the PMP, to obtain an address of the PMP, and to provide the SSP with further instructions comprising the
10 address of the PMP.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the indicator further indicates a desire by the particular subscriber to be connected to the PMP.

15 3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the PMP comprises a subscription messaging platform (SMP) providing the particular subscriber with messaging services.

20 4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the number comprises a subscription number.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein in action E, the further instructions comprise a directive to use the address to route the call to the SMP; and further comprising:

25 F. in response to receiving the further instructions, causing the call to be routed based on the address to the SMP.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein in action E, the further instructions comprise a directive to the SSP to present the address of the SMP to the call; and further comprising:

5 F. in response to receiving the further instructions, causing the SSP to present the address of the SMP to the call.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the pilot number comprises a number common to all subscribers of the messaging system for making administrative or pilot calls to the messaging system.

8. A method to provide a particular subscriber of a messaging system with access to a selected messaging platform (SMP) by making a call to a pilot number from a line number other than a particular line number of the subscriber, the method comprising:

5 A. in response to receiving the call to the pilot number on the line number, the line number being other than the particular line number of the subscriber, causing an SSP serving the line number to route the call to a messaging platform of the messaging system;

10 B. if the messaging platform receives a backout indicator in the call, then causing the messaging platform to provide a backout notice;

C. based on the backout notice, causing the SSP to engage in an exchange with an intelligent network element (INE) so as to result in the SSP obtaining a selected number from the particular subscriber and providing the selected number to the INE;

15 D. using the selected number, causing the INE to obtain an address for the SMP of the particular subscriber and to provide the address to the SSP; and

20 E. in response to receiving the address, causing the SSP to route the call to the address of the SMP and/or to present the address to the particular subscriber.

9. The method of Claim 8, further comprising, in response to the routing of the call to the messaging platform, causing the messaging platform to provide the particular subscriber with an announcement.

25

10. The method of Claim 9, wherein the announcement comprises information about an option available to the particular subscriber to backout of the call by providing the backout indicator.

5 11. The method of Claim 8, wherein the selected messaging platform comprises a subscription messaging platform of the particular subscriber.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein the selected number comprises the subscription number of the particular subscriber.

10 13. The method of Claim 8, wherein the pilot number comprises a number common to all subscribers of the messaging system for making administrative or pilot calls to the messaging system.

14. A method to provide a particular subscriber of a messaging system with access to a selected messaging platform (SMP) by making a call to a pilot number from a line number other than a particular line number of the subscriber, comprising:

5 A. in response to receiving the call, routing the call to a messaging platform of the messaging system;

B. after routing the call, receiving a backout notice from the messaging platform;

10 C. in response to receipt of the backout notice, participating in communications with an intelligent network element (INE) so as to result in obtaining a selected number from the particular subscriber, providing the selected number to the INE, and obtaining from the INE an address for the SMP of the particular subscriber; and

15 D. in response to receiving the address, routing the call to the address of the SMP or presenting the address of the SMP to the call.

15. The method of Claim 14, wherein the messaging platform comprises a visited messaging platform (VMP) serving the line number used by the particular subscriber to make the call to the pilot number.

20 16. The method of Claim 14, wherein the selected messaging platform comprises a subscription messaging platform of the particular subscriber.

25 17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the selected number comprises the subscription number of the particular subscriber.

18. The method of Claim 14, wherein the pilot number comprises a number common to all subscribers of the messaging system for making administrative or pilot calls to the messaging system.

19. A method to provide a particular subscriber of a messaging system with access to a selected messaging platform (SMP) by allowing the particular subscriber to make a call to a pilot number from a line number other than a particular line number of the subscriber, comprising:

5 A. in response to the call, causing the call to be routed to a messaging platform of the messaging system;

B. in response to receipt of a backout indicator relating to the call, causing a selected number to be obtained from the call so the selected number may be used to determine an address for the SMP; and

10 C. causing the address to be used to route the call to the selected messaging platform or to be presented to the particular subscriber.

20. The method of Claim 19, wherein the messaging platform comprises a visited messaging platform (VMP) serving the line number of the particular subscriber used to make the call to the pilot number.

21. The method of Claim 19, wherein the pilot number comprises a number common to all subscribers of the messaging system for making administrative or pilot calls to the messaging system.

20

22. A messaging system that allows a particular subscriber to access a messaging platform by allowing the particular subscriber to make a call to a pilot number from a line number other than a particular number of the subscriber, comprising:

5 a service switching point (SSP) adapted to engage in query/response exchanges with a service control point (SCP) to provide the SCP with call information with respect to a call that is made from a line number served by the SSP and that is made to a pilot number,

the call information comprising

10 the line number the call is made from,

a backout notice received in the call, and

a selected number provided in association with the call;

the SCP having data on which messaging platform serves which numbers in the messaging system, and the SCP adapted to use the data to engage in the query/response exchanges with the SSP to provide the SSP with further instructions for the call,

the further instructions comprising

a directive, based on the call being made to the pilot number, to route the call to an associated messaging platform, and

20 an instruction, based on the call providing a backout indicator to the associated messaging platform and the selected number to the SSP, either (1) to further route the call to a messaging platform other than the associated messaging platform, or (2) to present the call with further information; and

25 the associated messaging platform adapted to receive the call, and to provide the backout notice when the backout indicator is received from the call.

23. The messaging system of Claim 22, the further instructions comprising an address for another messaging platform.

24. The messaging system of Claim 22, the further information
5 comprising an address for another messaging platform.

25. The messaging system of Claim 22, wherein the associated messaging platform serves the line number served by the SSP.

10 26. The messaging system of Claim 22, wherein the messaging platform other than the associated messaging platform comprises a subscription messaging platform of the particular subscriber.

15 27. The messaging system of Claim 26, wherein the selected number comprises the subscription number of the particular subscriber.

28. The messaging system of Claim 22, wherein the pilot number comprises a number common to all subscribers of the messaging system for making administrative or pilot calls to the messaging system.

20